

Mobility Patterns of Asian Students: The Case of Tourism and Hospitality Management Students in the UK

Dr Roya Rahimi

Lecturer in Tourism, Hospitality, and Event Management
Department of Marketing, Innovation, Leisure, and Enterprise
University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom
Email: roya.rahimi@wlv.ac.uk

&

Dr Yılmaz Akgunduz

Associate Professor
Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts
Seferihisar Fevziye Hepkon, School of Applied Sciences,
Dokuz Eylul University, Turkey
yilmazakgunduz@hotmail.com

&

Dr Mehmet Ali Koseoglu

Assistant Professor
School of Hotel and Tourism Management
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Kowloon, Hong Kong
Email: mehmetali.koseoglu@polyu.edu.hk; trmaliktr@yahoo.com

&

Professor Fevzi Okumus

Rosen College of Hospitality Management
University of Central Florida, United States
Email: Fevzi.Okumus@ucf.edu

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the driving forces of Asian students to study tourism and hospitality in the United Kingdom (UK) at three stages, including: (1) choice of a foreign country, (2) selecting the UK as the host country, and (3) undertaking tourism and hospitality courses. We collected data using questionnaires, distributing among tourism and management students attending a major higher education provider in the UK. The findings identified subgroups of push and pull factors that explain the movement patterns of Asian students toward studying tourism and hospitality in the UK. Using a mathematical equation, this study revealed that “seeking a better life,” “the nature of the program,” and “external influences” significantly impact students’ movements.

Keywords: *Motivational Factors, Mobility Patterns, International Students, Higher Education, Tourism and Hospitality*

Introduction

Globalization is forcing higher education providers toward greater international engagement. This has resulted in a significant increase in international student flows and cross-border educational programs (Altbach and Knight, 2007; Varghese, 2008). Asian countries, in particular are witnessing rapid developments in cross-border higher education, which require teachers and students seeking education beyond their national boundaries to buy educational services at international services. Increased demand of international students in recent years have affected policymaking decisions related to higher education systems in different countries which increased intense effort from both governments and educational institutions to attract talented students (Furukawa et al., 2013).

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2014), in 2012, more than 4.5 million students were studying abroad. This is more than five times the number of students studying abroad in 1975. The average annual growth rate in international student mobility between 2000 and 2012 was seven percent. Europe is the top regional destination, hosting 48% of international students. North America follows with 21%, and then Asia with 18%. The largest numbers of international students are mainly from Asian countries, especially China, India, and Korea. Asian students account for 53% of all students studying abroad worldwide, with three out of four of them enrolled in an OECD¹ country (OECD, 2013). International students' movements have an impact on the economy, policies, and higher education system of every country (Furukawa et al., 2013).

International students seek various types of educational pursuits, including tourism and hospitality. Tourism and hospitality is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world. It is a labor-intensive industry that relies heavily on the availability of good quality workers to deliver, operate, and manage the tourist products (Amoah and Baum, 1997; Lee et al., 2015). With the growth of the industry, there has been a significant increase in the demand for frontline employees and professional managers. Tourism education has its roots in training courses for staff in different parts and has grown to include undergraduate and postgraduate courses designed to equip graduates for management careers (Morgan, 2004). In the 1930s, tourism was introduced as a subject by European universities (Faulkner, 2003) and in 1922 by Cornell University in the United States (Barrows and Bosselman, 1999). In recent decades, the economic scope and scale of this industry has convinced both governments and education providers to recognize tourism and hospitality as an important and legitimate field of study. Considering the growth in this industry and the need for professional labor, the number of education providers at different levels and in different countries offering tourism and hospitality as a course of study has rapidly increased.

From 2014 to 2015, 124,575 international students came to the UK. Most of these students were from Asian countries including China, India, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan (UKCISA, 2016). Under the broader subject of business and administration, tourism and hospitality is among the most popular programs for international students. According to UCAS (2016), a total of 156 education providers in the UK offer tourism and hospitality, representing the significant growth in the number of education providers offering this course of study. While tourism and hospitality courses are popular among Asian students and although there are multiple studies regarding international students' movements, statistical data reflecting the outbound patterns of Asian students in tourism and hospitality courses remains unknown. Following an initial study by Rahimi et al. (2016) regarding the motivations of South Asian students to study tourism and hospitality in the UK, the current study uses a mathematical equation to investigate the main driving forces of Asian students to (1) decide to study abroad, (2) select the UK as their study destination, and (3) choose tourism and hospitality degree programs. This is the first study that aims to identify potential

¹ *The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (French: Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques, OCDE) is an intergovernmental economic organisation with 35 member countries, founded in 1960 to stimulate economic progress and world trade.*

subgroups of push and pull factors for these three stages of international students' movements. The findings of the current study highlights several factors that higher education providers should consider when planning, developing, and providing prospective hospitality and tourism programs to international students. This article also sheds light on the curriculum design, student learning, building employability skills, and marketing implications for Asian students majoring in tourism and hospitality in the UK.

Literature Review

Decision Process

A combination of factors pushes students to seek opportunities beyond their home countries, while other factors pull them to choose a specific study destination (Peak, 2015). Factors such as economic, social, and political forces within the home country that initiate a student's decision to undertake study abroad are considered push factors. Factors within the host country that make that country attractive to students constitute pull factors (Bodycott, 2009; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; McMahon, 1992). A decision related to study abroad is influenced by these push-pull factors. The economic growth of the tourism and hospitality industry and its needs for appropriate skills workers increased the demand for education in this sector. There are more than 4.5 million international students enrolled in different higher and further education institutions around the globe.

Investigating the motivations of students to participate in formal higher education has been a key focus of several pedagogical scholars (Altbach and Knight, 2007; Brown and Carasso, 2013; James, 2002; Romaniuk and Romaniuk, 1982; Rahimi et al., 2016; Tomlinson, 2008; Zhou et al., 2008; Rahimi and Williams, 2015). A review of these studies shows that they are either based on quantitative data obtained by questionnaires from international students (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Park, 2009) or based on mathematical analyses of existing statistical data (González et al., 2011; McMahon 1992). In both approaches, the push-pull model can be used to describe the flow of international students. The decision process for international students involves three distinctive stages. The first is the decision to study abroad rather than locally, the second is the choice of the host country, and the third is undertaking a specific course of study (Rahimi et al., 2016).

First Stage - Study Abroad

In stage one, students decide to study internationally rather than locally. This can be influenced by a series of push factors in their home country (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; McMahon, 1992). Park (2009) analyzed international students' motivational drives and found that the academic quality and multi-cultural environment of host countries are the main pull factors. Anderson et al. (1998) explored the motivation of international students from career enhancement, professional advancement, and skills development perspectives. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) found influences from parents regarding study abroad are important, specifically among undergraduate students. However, even at the postgraduate level, Rahimi

et al. (2016) found that the decision to study abroad can be highly influenced by a member of the family and/or close friends. Once the decision of studying abroad has been made, the second stage is selection of the host country. In this stage, pull factors play a major role in making one host country relatively more attractive than others.

Second Stage- Selection of a Study Destination

Focusing on specific study destinations, Li and Bray (2007) in their study on Korean high school students found that the reputation of an institution was a key factor for choosing a host institution. Cantwell et al. (2009) investigated the motivations of students from developed countries who decide to study abroad in Mexico. In the case of international students in Turkey, Kondakci (2011) used the push–pull model, and introduced the concepts of pre/post-departure rationales and public/private rationales. His findings suggested that economic and academic rationales are the major pull factors for students from economically developing countries, while in contrast; private rationales are the pull factors for students from developed countries. Foreign qualifications in some countries are the main push factor, as attendance at these universities are often considered a guarantee for a better future (Ashley and Jiang, 2000) upon returning home. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) found that factors such as commonality of language, the availability of science or technology-based programs, and the geographic proximity of home and host countries are influential in selecting a country.

Attracting students and faculty from various countries, universities have been international institutions since their medieval European origins (Albatch, 2016). During the colonial period, the flow of students was primarily from colonies to world capitals. During the Cold War era, rival powers influenced the direction of student flow. In the era of globalization, attracting students to universities has become a market-driven and commercial activity (Varghese, 2008), with Europe and the United States as the dominant study destinations. Cost of education is the main factor that influences the direction of student flow, which is then followed by political considerations, such as lower funding levels. Considering the benefits student mobility has for countries, the competition to attract and retain students has diversified the map of study destinations over the past decade. In the last 18 years, the number of students crossing an international border to study has increased by over 150 percent, and the proportion of those coming to the UK has almost kept pace with this global growth (OECD, 2013).

According to the OECD (2014), the UK, the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and Australia collectively host more than half of the students studying abroad today. The first international student (Emo of Friesland) came to the UK in the 12th century to study at Oxford (Peak, 2014). Since then, there has been a flow of international students to the UK, and the percentage of international (non-EU) students in the UK has risen from 8.6% in 2003–04 to 12.1%, with 2.5 million students across 163 higher educational institutions, in 2011–12 (HESA, 2013). International students are economically crucial for the UK, as they contribute over £250,000 each day. More than one in every four non-EU students in UK higher

education are from China, and nearly half of all non-EU students are from East Asia (Peak, 2015).

A wide range of reasons have been cited by researchers for these trends, including the nature of the course curriculum, research focus, and competitive market conditions (Frankland and Smith, 2000). Marketing activities of different destinations also play a key role in this process and attracting students (Rahimi and Kozak, 2017; Rahimi and Gunlu, 2016; Rahimi, 2017). These issues have received attention for some time (Altbach and Knight, 2006) due to the substantial commercial implications of international students' income to supplement declining government funding. This has increased the importance of monitoring student's motivations to come to the UK (Cooper and O'Keefe, 2005). On the other hand, international student mobility and flow is changing, and students have more choices of quality study destinations. The number of institutions that provide flexibility for how students can approach and undertake their course is increasing. The number of non-EU, first-year enrollments in England fell by 1% in 2014-15, and this decline continued by 1.7% in 2015-16 (Morgan, 2016). Considering the role of international students in the UK economy and recent declines, there is a need for better understanding of international students' motivations to continue attracting such students to UK universities.

Third Stage- Selection of Specific Program

The third stage is selecting a specific program where students can be motivated by subject interest and the desire to develop their professional practice (Coulthard, 2000; Moogan and Baron, 2003) as well as self-development and knowledge enhancement (Suventola, 2004). The increase in employment, career advancement, and wage improvements are also the main motivational factors for selecting specific courses (Hannam et al., 2004). Despite findings regarding students' general motivations to study abroad, there has been limited research (Kim et al., 2007; Rahimi et al., 2016) focusing on reasons for why students elect to study tourism and hospitality education abroad.

Research Method

The research is conducted with a quantitative approach. A questionnaire adapted from Rahimi et al. (2016) is used. Rahimi et al. (2016) in their study through a qualitative approach found 23 items as the main motivational factors among South Asian students to study tourism and hospitality in the UK. We used these items to identify potential push and pull subgroups, and to propose an equation to predict the movement patterns of Asian students. The questionnaire was comprised of four parts, and was based on a 5-point Likert-Scale. The first part included questions related to the decision to study abroad. The second part included questions related to the motivational factors to select the UK as a study destination. The third part consisted of questions related to the decision to study tourism and hospitality programs. The final section included demographic questions. An online survey tool was used (Survey Monkey), and the link to the questionnaire was distributed among 400 undergraduate and postgraduate Asian students studying at a higher education provider in the UK. One week

after initial distribution, a reminder e-mail was sent. After two weeks, the second reminder was sent and after four weeks, the final reminder was sent, stating the importance of the participant's input for the study. In total, 163 usable responses were collected. Incomplete questionnaires were disregarded, and 153 responses were considered for analysis. SPSS Software (Version 21) was used, and the data was subjected to descriptive and factor analysis as well as multiple regressions. Statistical analysis was used to identify potential subgroups of push and pull factors for each decision stage.

Results

The respondents' profile is shown in Table 1. Among the 153 respondents, the majority were males (70%). 72% of the respondents were above the age of 30. About 27% of the respondents were Bangladeshi, followed by 18% from Sri Lanka, 10% from Nepal, and 8% from Pakistan. The majority of respondents were undergraduate students.

Table 1

To identify the potential subgroups of push and pull factors, three different sets of Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFA) were employed, based on the three stages of the study: (1) study abroad, (2) selecting the UK, and 3) selecting tourism and hospitality courses. For this purpose, the principal component method of factor analysis was carried out with Eigenvalues greater than one through varimax rotation. The results obtained through the rotated component matrix are presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4. Initially, the factorability of 23 items was examined and four items were eliminated, as they did not contribute to a simple factor structure and failed to meet the minimum criteria of having a primary factor loading of 0.4 or above and no cross-loading of 0.3 or above. In total, 19 items were used for further analysis.

A test of internal reliability was conducted before proceeding to analyze the objective and research question of the study. This assessment was important for generating information regarding the consistency among ratings given by the respondents from all collected data (Pallant, 2007). The most commonly used method to evaluate quantitative measurements is Cronbach's alpha confidence. All the values that were above 0.600 were considered acceptable and appropriate to proceed with further testing (Pallant, 2007). The overall Cronbach's alpha of scale was 0.667, indicating that each measure demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha of the scale varied from 0.682 to 0.633 for different factors, which showed that the different factors also had acceptable internal consistency.

Exploratory Factor Analyses for Stage 1 - Studying Abroad

Factor analysis of stage 1 variables is shown in Table 2. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was 0.65, which is above the recommended value of 0.60, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant. The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.5, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis (Hair, 2010). The commonalities were all above 0.30, further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items.

Factor analysis for study abroad variables showed two independent groups. We labeled these two groups as “Global Socializing (Pull factors)” and “Seeking Better Life (Push and Pull factors),” accounting for a total of 55 percent of variations on seven attributes. Each of these two groups contributes to 28.60% and 26.606%, respectively.

Table 2

As shown in Table 2, it is inferred that out of seven attributes, three variables have tightly grouped factor loadings. We labeled this group as “Global Socializing.” This group consists of three pull factors, including “I would like to meet different people (0.818),” “I would like to make more friends (0.798),” and “I would like to experience different cultures (0.701).” The Seeking Better Life (Push and Pull Factors) group consists of four pull factors, including “It can lead me and my family to a quality life (0.810),” “I presume that it will open doors for global job opportunities in the future (0.690),” “A certificate from abroad has a better value (.664),” and one push factor of “My family encouraged me to come (0.525).”

Exploratory Factor Analyses for Stage 2 - Selecting the UK as a Study Destination

Factor analysis of stage 2 variables is shown in Table 3. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was 0.62, which is above the recommended value of 0.6, and Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant. The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis (Hair, 2010). Finally, factor loadings were all above 0.30, further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items. Factor analysis for selecting the UK as a study destination showed two independent groups of factors. We labeled these two groups as “Ease (Pull factors)” and “Reputation (push and pull factors),” which accounted for a total of 54.356% of the variation in six attributes.

Table 3

As shown in Table 3, it is inferred that out of six attributes, three variables have their tightly grouped factor loadings. We labeled this group as “Ease.” This factor consists of three variables, including “It is easy to find a job in the UK (0.786),” “The visa process is easier in comparison to the other countries (0.781),” and “It is close to home in comparison to other countries such as Australia, U.S.A., and Canada (0.707).” The reputation group consists of three variables, including “UK education has a global brand reputation (0.739),” “UK is a multi-culture country (0.712),” and “I like to improve my English (0.626).”

Exploratory Factor Analyses for Stage 3 - Selecting Tourism and Hospitality Courses

As shown in Table 4, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was 0.73, above the recommended value of 0.6, and Bartlett’s test of sphericity was significant. The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis (Hair, 2010). Finally, the factor loadings were all above 0.30, further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items. Factor analysis for selecting tourism and hospitality programs showed two independent groups of factors. We labeled

them as “Program Nature (Pull)” and “External Impacts (Push).” These two independent groups account for a total 56.562% of the variation of six attributes.

Table 4

As shown in Table 4, it is inferred that out of six attributes, three variables have their tightly grouped factor loadings. We labeled this group as “Program Nature.” This group consists of the variables: “There are a lot of job opportunities in this field (0.781),” “It is easier in comparison on other fields (0.654),” and “I believed this field is practical rather than theoretical in nature (0.539).” Another group consists of three push variables, including “The influence from agents was very high (0.894),” “My family encouraged me to study this field (0.600),” and “My friends influenced my decision (0.563).” We labeled this group as “External Impacts.”

Correlation and Regression Analysis

Table 5 highlights the correlation between the six labeled groups of Global Socializing, Better Life, Ease, Reputation, Program Nature, and External Impacts. The results indicate that Global Socializing has a significant, positive relationship with Ease Factors ($r=0.197$, $p<0.05$), Reputation Factors ($r=0.265$, $p<0.01$) and Program Nature ($r=0.295$, $p<0.01$). As shown in Table 5, the Better Life factor has a significant positive relationship with Ease Factors ($r=0.253$, $p<0.01$), Reputation Factors ($r=0.354$, $p<0.01$), Program Nature Factors ($r=0.470$, $p<0.01$) and External Factors ($r=0.262$, $p<0.01$). Ease Factors have a significant, positive relationship with Program Nature ($r=0.281$, $p<0.01$) and External Impacts ($r=0.323$, $p<0.01$). Reputation Factors have a significant, positive relationship with Program Nature factors ($r=0.497$, $p<0.01$) and External Impacts ($r=0.271$, $p<0.01$).

Table 5

The relationships between the factors and overall preference of students for three stages were tested by conducting multiple regressions (Table 6). The results suggest that Seeking Better Life ($\beta=0.205$, $p<0.001$), Program Nature ($\beta=0.287$, $p<0.001$), and External Impacts ($\beta=0.203$, $p<0.001$) had significant correlation with overall study in the UK, and selecting tourism and hospitality programs. Global Socialising did not show a significance impact. In mathematical terms, the equation can be written (with a constant of 1.328) as:

$$Y (\text{Overall Preference}) = 1.328 + 0.205 (\text{Seeking Better Life}) + 0.287 (\text{Program Nature}) + 0.203 (\text{External Impacts})$$

The independent variables (Global Socializing, Seeking Better Life, Program Nature, and External Impacts) can explain 32.4% of the variation in dependent variables (overall preference of selecting the UK for Tourism and Hospitality education).

Table 6

Mean Ratings for Studying Abroad, Selecting the UK, and Selecting Tourism and Hospitality

Table 7 displays the mean scores for 19 variables of research. Among push and pull variables of stage 1 (studying abroad), global job opportunities with a mean of 4.66 was perceived as the most important driving force for the students. The variable with the lowest mean was encouragement from family (mean=3.56). Among push and pull variables for stage 2, the global brand reputation of UK higher education with a mean score of 4.52 was perceived as the most important factor. The variable with the lowest mean was “The visa process is easier in comparison to the other countries” (mean=2.65). Among push and pull variables for stage 3 (selecting tourism and hospitality programs), availability of job opportunities in this field with a mean score of 4.40 was perceived as the most important factor. The statement with the lowest mean was the influence from agents and student recruitment companies (mean=2.23).

Table7

Discussion and Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate the motivating factors that influence Asian students’ decision to study tourism and hospitality in the UK at the three stages of (1) choice of foreign or home country, (2) choice of host country, and (3) choice of tourism and hospitality courses. The study found a set factor that is formed by the students’ culture, society, family background, and awareness level, followed by the competitive advantages offered by the UK as a multicultural global destination. The research findings revealed experiencing different cultures, availability of job opportunities in this field, and the global reputation of UK higher education are the main motivating factors for these students. The research findings also show that hospitality and tourism students have a similar pattern and motivational factors to students in other academic programs. Along with Ashley and Jiang (2000), the study findings reveal that foreign qualifications in Asian countries are considered a guarantee for a better future through developing the skills needed for lucrative employment prospects upon returning home.

The findings also revealed that along with the economic and social situation in the students’ home countries, personal recommendations and word of mouth act as push factors and knowledge, reputation, and competitive advantages of the UK act as pull factors. Regarding push and pull factors at different stages, we found that the impact of pull factors, namely global socializing, seeking better life, reputation, ease of the processes, and nature of the program are critical at stages 1 and 2. Moreover, we found that external push factors, including agents’ influence or recommendation from friends have a strong impact during stage 3, which is selecting tourism and hospitality programs. These findings are consistent with Mazzarol and Soutar’s (2002) and McMahon’s (1992) studies.

The study findings also suggested several key factors that higher education providers with international students need to consider when planning, developing, and providing prospective programs. The findings showed that most students decide to study abroad to make friends and meet people from different cultures so co-curriculum activities can be arranged for international students to socialize. These events can be implemented by student unions, international offices, and/or alumni associations. Building partnerships with international service clubs can also help international students feel less isolated during the beginning of their studies and receive an invaluable cultural experience that increases their feelings of self-worth and accomplishment. At the classroom level, more group activities can increase the number of interactions between international students and their peers.

One of the main changes international students face is adapting to the curriculum and UK quality standards, which in some cases may result in high plagiarism scores and ghost-writing (Dordoy, 2000). This issue needs to be considered by both instructors and institution administrators. Adding study skills classes to the curriculum or having guest lectures about academic writing in each course could help to rectify this issue. Findings of this study showed that having a career in tourism and hospitality is one the main pull factors for students; thus, adding employability skills (Raybould and Wilkins, 2005) into the curriculum in the form of employability modules or additional lectures from career services can enhance students' skills. Another recommendation for curriculum design and student learning is offering more practical courses such as simulating software or work placements. Considering the motivations of the students and needs of the job market, learning outcomes can be adopted in a way that more effectively meets the needs of the industry.

Earning money is a key motive for both profit and some traditional non-profit universities with financial challenges. By investing resources in the factors found in this study, different universities can increase the number of their international students by offering them what they are looking for. The study results have clear implications for the marketing departments of universities seeking to attract more international students. According to UCAS, 77 higher and further institutions in the UK are offering hospitality and tourism programs. To maintain a competitive advantage, these universities must better understand the changing trends in the recruitment market, and identify and explore various push and pull factors influencing decisions of potential students from Asian countries. Destination marketers from the UK and the tourism and hospitality education marketers from UK universities should communicate and work together in their efforts.

As the result of Brexit, the stability of the UK economy and free movement across European borders are now in question. This has both short-term and long-term implications for international students and universities. If universities suffer financially, whether because of a lack of EU funding or because fewer EU citizens decide to study at UK universities, they may decide to increase fees for international students to make up for the deficit. This may have a negative impact on the number of international students; hence, there is a need to better understand international students' motivations for attending UK universities and to provide better student experiences.

Limitations and Future Research

This research regarding international students is conducted using a case study of Asian students. Therefore, the research findings cannot be generalized to a larger population. Moreover, this research was conducted in the context of higher education providers; thus, the study results may be different for other educational levels such as HND. According to the UK Council for International Student Affairs, UK higher education institutions are currently hosting a large number of European students. Moreover, according to Times Higher Education, there are now more U.S. students than Indian students studying at UK universities. Further research studies can focus on these population samples, and the results can be compared. On the other hand, global university rankings have become popular and have attracted attention from stakeholders in higher education. The impact of mock TEF and the newly emerged hierarchy regarding the number of recruitments can be investigated by future research. Finally, although the UK has been a destination of choice for many Asian students, future studies can focus on the movement patterns of international students in countries such as Australia, Canada, and the United States.

References

- Altbach, P. G. (2016). *Global Perspectives on Higher Education*. JHU Press.
- Altbach, P. G., & Knight, J. (2006). The internationalization of higher education: Motivations and realities. *Journal of studies in international education*, 11(3-4), 290-305.
- Altbach, P. G., & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education: Motivations and realities. *Journal of studies in international education*, 11(3-4), 290-305.
- Anderson, M. S., & Swazey, J. P. (1998). Reflections on the graduate student experience: An overview. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 1998(101), 3-13.
- Ashley, D .and Jiang, Y. (2000). *Mao's Children in the New China*. Beijing, China: Routledge.
- Barrows, C. W., & Bosselman, R. H. (1999). *Hospitality management education*. Psychology Press.
- Bodycott, P (2009) Choosing a higher education study abroad destination: What mainland Chinese parents and students rate as important. *Journal of Research in International Education*. Vol 8, 363 349-373.
- Brown, R., & Carasso, H. (2013). *Everything for sale?: the marketization of UK higher education*. Routledge.

Cantwell, B., & Maldonado-Maldonado, A. (2009). Four stories: Confronting contemporary ideas about globalisation and internationalisation in higher education. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 7(3), 289-306.

Cooper, B., and O'Keefe, S. (2005). The importance of credit transfer in the decision to undertake post-compulsory education: An exercise in experimental choice analysis. Paper presented to the Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association Conference, Brisbane, Australia.

Coulthard, D. (2000). Identifying the changing needs of Australian coursework postgraduate students. Melbourne, Australia: Evaluations and Investigations Programme Higher Education Division, School of Management Information Systems, Deakin University. Available at: <http://www.dest.gov.au/archive/highered/eippubs/eip99-9/default.htm> Accessed on 02/20/2014.

Dordoy, A. (2000). Cheating and plagiarism: student and staff perceptions at Northumbria. In *Proceedings of the Northumbria Conference*, July. (p. 4).

Frankland, M., & Smith, B. (2000). Marketisation and the new quality agenda: postgraduate coursework at the crossroads. *Australian Universities' Review, The*, 43(2), 7.

Furukawa, T., Shirakawa, N., and Okuwada, K. (2013). An empirical study of graduate student mobility underpinning research universities. *Higher Education*, 66(1), 17-37.

González, C. R., Mesanza, R. B., & Mariel, P. (2011). The determinants of international student mobility flows: an empirical study on the Erasmus programme. *Higher Education*, 62(4), 413-430.

Hair, J. F. (2010). Multivariate data analysis. Pearson College Division.

Hannam, K., Mitsche, N., and Stone, C. (2004). Tourism employability and the European social fund. In J. Tribe and E. Wickens (eds.), *Critical issues in tourism education: Conference of the Association for Tourism in Higher Education* (pp. 39–52). Buckinghamshire, UK: Missenden Abbot.

Havergal, C. (2016). *Mock TEF results revealed: a new hierarchy emerges*. Available: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/mock-teaching-excellence-framework-tef-results-revealed-a-new-hierarchy-emerges>. Last accessed 11/18/2016

HESA (2013). Patterns and trends 2013 in UK higher education. Available at:

Hung, F. S., Chung, Y. P., and Ho, S. C. (2000). To work or to continue to higher education? The choice of senior secondary students in Shenzhen, China. *Higher Education*, 39, 455–67.

James, R. (2002). Students' changing expectations of higher education and the consequences of mismatches with reality. *Responding to student expectations*, 1, 71-83.

Kim, S. S., Guo, Y., Wang, K. C., & Agrusa, J. (2007). The study motivations and study preferences of student groups from Asian nations majoring in hospitality and tourism management programs. *Tourism Management*, 28(1), 140-151.

Kondakci, Y. (2011). Student mobility reviewed: attraction and satisfaction of international students in Turkey. *Higher Education*, 62(5), 573-592.

Lee, D., Hampton, M., & Jeyacheya, J. (2015). The political economy of precarious work in the tourism industry in small island developing states. *Review of International Political Economy*, 22(1), 194-223.

Li, M., & Bray, M. (2007). Cross-border flows of students for higher education: Push-pull factors and motivations of mainland Chinese students in Hong Kong and Macau. *Higher education*, 53(6), 791-818.

Mazzarol, T., and Soutar, G. N. (2002). "Push-pull" factors influencing international student destination choice. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 16(2), 82-90.

McMahon, M. E. (1992). Higher education in a world market. *Higher education*, 24(4), 465-482.

Michael Morgan, (2004), "From production line to drama school: higher education for the future of tourism", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 16 Iss 2 pp. 91 – 99.

Moogan, Y.J., and Baron, S. (2003). An analysis of student characteristics within the student decision making process. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 27(3), 271–287.

Morgan, J. (2016). *Student mobility into and out of the UK: the trends*. Available: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/student-mobility-into-and-out-of-the-uk-the-trends>. Last accessed 11/18/2016.

Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

OECD. (2013). *EDUCATION INDICATORS FOCUS*. Available: <https://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/EDIF%202013N%C2%B014%20%28eng%29-Final.pdf>. Last accessed 11/07/2016.

OECD. (2014). *OECD releases detailed study of global education trends for 2014*. Available: <http://monitor.icef.com/2014/09/oecd-releases-detailed-study-global-education-trends-2014/>. Last accessed 11/07/2016.

Pallant, J. (2007). *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows* (3rd ed.). Berkshire: Open University Press.

Park, N. (2009). User acceptance of e-learning in higher education: An application of Technology Acceptance Model. In *Annual meeting of the International Communication Association, New York*.

Peak, M. (2014). *Overseas student number falls 'significant risk' to sector*. Available: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/overseas-student-number-falls-significant-risk-to-sector>. Last accessed 11/18/2016.

Peak, M. (2015). *UK is top host of international students, but for how long?*. Available: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/uk-top-host-international-students-how-long>. Last accessed 11/08/2016.

Rahimi, R. (2017) Customer Relationship Management (People, Process and Technology) and Organisational Culture in Hotels: Which traits matter?. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. 29 (5) . DOI: 10.1108/IJCHM-10-2015-0617.

Rahimi, R., and Gunlu, E. (2016). Implementing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in hotel industry from organisational culture perspective. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. 28 (1). 89 – 112.

Rahimi, R., and Kozak, M. (2017). Impact of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Satisfaction: The Case of a Budget Hotel Chain. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 34(1), 40-51.

Rahimi, R., and Williams, S. (2015). Motivations of eastern European students to study tourism and hospitality (HND level) in the UK: case of Romanian students. In *The 5th Advances in Hospitality & Tourism Marketing and Management (AHTMM) Conference*, Beppu, Japan, 18-21 June 2015 (pp. 359-365). Washington State University.

Rahimi, R., Nadda, V., Hyseni, B., & Mulindwa, D. (2016). Motivations of South Asian Students to Study Tourism and Hospitality in the United Kingdom. In *Tourism and Hospitality Management* (pp. 223-234). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Raybould, M., & Wilkins, H. (2005). Over qualified and under experienced: Turning graduates into hospitality managers. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(3), 203-216.

Romaniuk, J. G., & Romaniuk, M. (1982). Participation motives of older adults in higher education: The Elderhostel experience. *The Gerontologist*, 22(4), 364-368.

Suvantola, J. (2004). Self-determination theory in charting students' motivation. In J. Tribe and E. Wickens, *Critical issues in tourism education: Proceedings of the 2004 Conference of*

the Association for Tourism in Higher Education (pp. 139–144). Buckinghamshire, UK: Missenden Abbet.

Tomlinson, M. (2008). 'The degree is not enough': students' perceptions of the role of higher education credentials for graduate work and employability. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29(1), 49-61.

UCAS. (2016). *Course search*. Available: <http://search.ucas.com/>. Last accessed 11/07/2016.

UKCISA. (2016). *International student statistics: UK higher education*. Available: <http://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk/info-for-universities-colleges--schools/policy-research--statistics/research--statistics/international-students-in-uk-he/>. Last accessed 11/07/2016.

Vanessa A. Amoah Tom Baum, (1997), "Tourism education: policy versus practice", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 9 Iss 1 pp. 5 – 12.

Varghese, N. V. (2008). *Globalization of higher education and cross-border student mobility*. Paris, France: Unesco, International Institute for Educational Planning.

Zhou, Y., Jindal-Snape, D., Topping, K., & Todman, J. (2008). Theoretical models of culture shock and adaptation in international students in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 33(1), 63-75.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents (N=153)

Respondents' Profile	N	%
Gender		
Male	103	70
Female	50	30
Age		
18-30	43	28
31 and more	110	72
Education level		
Undergraduate	87	57
Postgraduate	66	43
Nationality		
Pakistan	12	8
Sri-Lanka	29	18
Bangladesh	42	27
China	21	13
Nepal	15	10
Malaysia	3	2
Iraq	4	3
Iran	4	3
India	11	7
Korean	10	7
Turkish	2	1

Table 2. Factor Analysis for stage 1 - Studying Abroad

	Factor Loadings	Mean	Eigenvalues	% of Variation	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean
Global Socializing (Pull)		4.3832	2.302	28.602	.685	4.3832
I would like to meet different people.	.818	4.3987				
I would like to make more friends.	.798	4.0973				
I would like to experience different cultures.	.701	4.6536				
Seeking Better Life (Push and Pull)		4.2331	1.563	26.606	.610	4.2331
It can lead me and my family to a quality life.	.810	4.1752				
I presume that it will open doors for global job opportunities in the future.	.690	4.6601				
A certificate from abroad has a better value.	.664	4.5350				
My family encouraged me to come.	.525	3.5621				
KMO= 0.649 Barlett's Test of Sphericity: 189.753 Sig=.000 Cronbach's Alpha=0.648 Mean=4.297 F= 46.932						

Table 3. Factor analysis for Stage 2 - Selecting UK as a Study Destination

	Factor Loading	Mean	Eigenvalues	AVE	CR	Mean
Ease (pull)		2.7515	1.872	28.924	.619	2.7515
It is easy to find a job in the UK.	.786	2.6883				
The visa process is easier in comparison to the other countries.	.781	2.6494				
It is close to home in comparison to other countries such as Australia, U.S.A., and Canada.	.707	2.9167				
Reputation (pull)		4.3640	1.389	25.432	.482	4.3640
UK education has a global brand reputation.	.739	4.5156				
UK is a multi-culture country.	.712	4.4414				
I like to improve my English.	.626	4.1351				
<i>KMO= 0.617 Barlett's Test of Sphericity: 95.753 Sig=.000 Cronbach's Alpha=0.522 Mean=3.5578 F= 139.872</i>						

Table 4. Factor Analysis for Stage 3 - Selecting Tourism and Hospitality Courses

	Factor Loading	Mean	Eigenvalues	AVE	CR	Mean
Program Nature (Pull)		3.913	2.306	38.429	.480	3.913
There are job opportunities in this field.	.781	4.398				
It is easier in comparison on other fields.	.654	3.407				
This field is practical rather than theoretical	.539	3.935				
External Impacts (Push)		2.509	1.088	18.133	.633	2.509
The influence from agents was very high.	.894	2.233				
My family encouraged me to study this field.	.600	2.684				
My friends influenced my decision.	.563	2.609				
<i>KMO= 0,731 Barlett's Test of Sphericity: 128,113 Sig=,000 Cronbach's Alpha=0,667 Mean=3,2113 F= 133,600</i>						

Table 5. Correlation Analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Global Socializing	1					
2.Better Life	.230**	1				
3.Ease Factors	.197*	.253**	1			
4.Reputation Factors	.265**	.354**	.107	1		
5. Program Nature	.295**	.470**	.281**	.497**	1	
6.External Impacts	.131	.262**	.323**	.271**	.415**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis

Factor	Unstandardized Coefficient Beta	SE	Unstandardized Coefficient Beta	Variance Inflation Factor	P
Constant	1.328	.357			.001
Global Socializing	.116	.070	.116	1.108	.099
Seeking Better Life	1.88	.070	.205	1.308	.008
Program Nature	.236	.068	.287	1.518	.001
External Impacts	.126	.046	.203	1.217	.007
R=.585 R²=.342 ΔR²=.324 F=19.204 Sig=0.001					

Note: * $p < 0.05$, overall why prefer the UK for t/h education is the dependent variable.

Table 7. Mean Values of statements measuring selecting abroad, selecting UK, and selecting tourism and hospitality courses

Stages	Factors and Variables	Mean	SD
Stage 1	Study Abroad - Global Socialising	4.383	.54076
	I would like to experience different cultures (pull)	4.653	.63163
	I would like to make more friends (pull)	4.097	.80300
	I would like to meet different people (pull)	4.398	.62133
	Study Abroad - Seeking Better Life	4.233	.58646
	Certificates from abroad have a better value (pull)	4.535	.76300
	My family encouraged me to come (push)	3.562	1.0565
	That it will open doors for global job opportunities in the future (pull)	4.660	.58673
	It can lead me and my family to a quality life (pull)	4.175	.97029
Stage 2	Selecting UK - Ease	2.751	.86717
	The visa process is easier in comparison to the other countries (pull)	2.649	1.1041
	It is easy to find a job in the UK (pull)	2.688	.99087
	It is close to home in comparison to other countries such as Australia, U.S.A., and Canada (pull)	2.916	1.3326
	Selecting UK - Reputation	4.364	.60254
	UK education has a global brand reputation (pull)	4.515	.75391
	I like to improve my English (pull)	4.135	1.0624
	UK is a multi-culture country (pull)	4.441	.75324
Stage 3	Study Tourism and Hospitality - Program Nature	3.913	.65189
	There are a lot of job opportunities in this field (pull)	4.398	.69149
	It is easier in comparison on other fields (pull)	3.407	1.1567
	I believed this field is practical rather than theoretical in nature (pull)	3.935	.91422
	Study Tourism and Hospitality - External Impacts	2.509	.86622
	My family encouraged me to study this field (push)	2.684	1.1468
	My friends influenced my decision (push)	2.609	1.1532
	The influence from agents was very high (push)	2.233	1.1203

Notes: Five-point Likert scale was used to measure perception of why abroad country, why UK and why t/h education where 1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agreed. Overall mean of 7 statements measuring why abroad country 4.31, overall mean of 6 statement measuring why UK 3.56, overall mean of 6 measuring why t/h education 3.21.